B.T. 304

A PLAIN and EASIE METHOD;

SHEWING

How the Office of OVERSEER of the POOR may be managed, whereby it may be 9000 *l. per Annum* Advantage to the County of *DEVON*, without abating the Weekly Relief of any *Poor*, or doing a Penny damage to any *Person*.

By *RICHARD DUNNING*, Gent.

—— Venienti occurrite morbo.
Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se. Juven. Sat.

LONDON,

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This may be Printed, *R. L. S.*

Septemb. 15. 1685.

To the Right Worſhipful, and my Honoured *Maſters*, the *Juſtices* of the Peace for the County of *DEVON*.

AS Juſtice is the common preſerver of Humane Society; of Order, Peace, and Commerce, conſiſting of thoſe two general parts, Preventing *and* Puniſhing; *ſo the firſt is the chief and more noble part thereof: That not only nips Vice in its Bud and Bloſſom, but ſo refines its Naturat Soil, that its very* Source *becomes to be obſtructed, and its* Progreſs *prevented; neither are the miſchiefs few or inconſiderable, where this firſt branch hath not its due and wiſhed effects. Thoſe who are not employed in duly diſcharging what properly belongs to their Places and Callings, ſoon becoming diſſolute, following the wild mazes of their Wills and Paſſions; hence ariſe ſuch ſwarms of Mutineers and Levellers, the loud noiſe for* Liberty *and* Property, *tho the invading that of* others *is only aimed at.*

The Prefaces of ſeveral Laws obſerve it as too common, That they who lay aſide their Lawful Trades and Employments, do thereupon betake themſelves to the taking, killing, and ſtealing of Game, appropriated to Noblemen, Gentlemen, &c. And common Experience ſhews that ſuch takers ſeldom confine themſelves to the breach of Laws for preſerving Game, but having

gone over those bounds and limits, beyond which they may not innocently pass, are in a short time dextrous in other Pilfrings. And did not the diligence of Magistrates, and their often punishing such loose Persons, prevent them from acting bare-faced, they would soon in no less measure than the Goths *and* Vandals *of Old, and the* Wastcoteers *of late, be a terror to all People.*

It has been an aspersion unjustly cast on the Statutes of the 43 Eliz. *for* Relief *of Poor, That that Law hath made multitudes idle and careless: And that allowing them a Refuge for Relief from their Parishes, hath caused them the less to provide for themselves. Indeed, by that Law the Parish is (as they commonly say)* bound to find them, *but that in a far* other *and* larger *sense than they mean,* viz. Work for those that WILL Labour, *Punishment for those that* WILL NOT, *and Bread for those that* cannot. *And if the two first parts of that Law were duly observed, the* Poor *would not only be reduced to a small number, comparatively to what they* now *are, but there would be no such Poor as idle and wandring Rogues and Vagabonds, as the Statute of the* 29th. *of the same Queen shews there were before that time: And the Punishment appointed for such loose Persons being, that they be Whipt, and sent to the place of their Birth, as an Admonition to the Inhabitants of that place, to bring up their Children better.*

Those who have observed the Method that the Ancient Laws direct for Pursuing and Apprehending Felons and other Capital Offenders, by Hue *and* Cries, *have lookt on it as almost*

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impossible (were such ways duly pursued) for such to escape the reach of Justice. But they that have deliberately considered of the Laws of a later date, especially the 4th. 39th. 43th. *of the late Queen, and the* 4th. *and* 7th. *of King* James; *and of the Methods they direct for the early placing out the Children of the Poor,* Apprentices; *and those of riper Years in* Service; *That none be entertained in Service without due Testimonials whence they came; nor* then *by the* pound, piece, *or* pair, *in which Masterless Method many* serve *more* Masters *in a* Week *than they spend sober Nights, but for no less time than a Year: That Persons of all Ages and Sexes be duly employed, and of all Qualities, be neither Idle nor disorderly: The Annual choice of Officers in every Parish to see those things, and others of the like Nature, duly observed; and withall, the Penalties on them that remain remiss or negligent. To which may be added the late Laws of Excise, which as they are Advantageous in producing a vast Revenue to the Crown, so are more Advantageous to the Country in affording a constant and Genteel livelihood to multitudes of decayed Tradesmen, Gentlemen, &c. (to which every one contributes as little as he pleaseth, no one being Obliged to keep or frequent Ale-houses) may well admire that there is any longer a Felon in the Gaol, or an Idler in the Streets. And that there may not be such, there can scarce be better ways contrived than the Laws direct, nor any in a greater measure enablea to effect it than the Justices of the Peace are. To you through His Majesties favour belongs the choice of nominating, placing, displacing, directing, and encouraging almost all subordi-*

ordinate and inferiour Officers; and of Examining, Inspecting, and Punishing their omissions and neglects; and now, if ever, it's time to restrain the increase of the Poor, by restraining the Idleness and Insolence of the meaner sort. That the Method hereby proposed is both practicable and easie, is manifest, and the Legality of it is fully attested, by being Examined and Approved of by a considerable number of eminent Justices of the Peace of this County; being no new thing, but a more literal and direct observance of the Law than the common practice is.

And tho it cannot be certainly asserted what Annual Advantage such Method in a whole County may produce, yet as far as can well be computed, and as may upon good grounds be presumed, the Yearly Profit to the Publick would far exceed what this Paper mentions.

If the Children in the City of Norwich between the Ages of Six and Ten Years, gain 12000 l. per Annum beyond their Maintenance, as an * Author of good Credit affirms to have appeared upon a late Computation there made, how much greater Sum might be advanced in so many Populous Towns, and in so large a County as this is, by the Labours of such and others of riper Years, who now spend most of their time idly, or worse? Besides many other Advantages would thence arise, some whereof are obvious to the meanest Capacity: And when ever an Act of this Nature shall be thought worth the vigorous prosecution, a sufficiency of fit subservient Agents will never be wanting.

* Author of the State of England, Dr. Chamberlain.

A plain and easie Method, &c.

ALthough I have no particular knowledge of the ſeveral Pariſhes in this County, yet as 'tis true, that the Charge to the Poor in many Pariſhes doth exceed *W.* in a proportionable rate; and that every Pariſh is, or may be equally burthened with *W.* So 'tis as true, that the general increaſe of ſuch Charge (which is near double what it was Thirty Years ſince, and like to double again in a ſhorter time) is not occaſioned by any Dearth or Scarcity of Neceſſaries, there being never a *greater* Plenty. Nor for want of Employments, there being never *more*; nor through the ſmalneſs of Wages, that being never ſo *great*: But by *Idleneſs*, profuſe Expences, the *ill* bringing up of Children, and the younger ſort. Now, how all thoſe inconveniences may with eaſe, and without the help of any *new* Law, or breach of an *old*, be ſo far remedied, as to be of 9000 *l. per Annum* clear Advantage to this County, I ſhall briefly demonſtrate.

Firſt, That 40 *l. per Annum* in the Pariſh of *W.* is ſomewhat more than 1000 *l.* in the *Subdiviſion*; and 1000 *l. per Annum* in the *Subdiviſion* is ſomewhat more than

than 9000 *l. per Annum* in the *County*. (The disproportion between the South and the other two grand *Divisions* being considered) consequently that which may be done elsewhere as well as in *Winckley*, as what is hereby proposed may, and is 40 *l. per Annum* clear Advantage to the Parish of *W.* may, and will be 9000 *l. per Annum* and upwards Advantage to this County. This being granted, nothing more remains than to shew how an Overseer of the Poor of *W.* hath, and still may benefit that Parish not only 40 *l. per Annum*, but a far greater Sum beyond what hath been done by any other.

Each private Person being considered as a Member of the *Publick*, nothing is more *plain* than this; That he that spends an hour *idly*, or in *Begging*, Cheating, or Stealing, either in that time gets nothing at all, or nothing to the *Publick*, some one or other receiving damage equal to his gains: Whereas he that spends that short time in any Lawful Labour, and thereby earns a penny, earns that small sum without any damage to any Person, (*Sic parvis componere magna.*) And therefore lay this as a Foundation, That whatsoever is *Lawfully* earned by the procurement of an Overseer of the Poor by such Persons, and in such time, who would otherwise spend the same time in idleness, unprofitable or ill Employments, is *clear gain*, no one receiving any *damage* thereby.

This being granted, the bringing common Beggers to Work, as also common Bayliffs and Apparators, who perchance serve a Process or two in a Month, and live idly

idly the rest of their time. The keepers of small Tippling-houses, and such-like loose Persons, they being with their whole Retinue brought constantly to Labour in an honest Employent, the product of their Labour is clear *gain*.

It has been almost a Proverbial saying, That *'tis a great trouble to bring Beggers to Stocks*, but to bring Beggers, *&c.* to *Work*, to leave a habit of Idleness, and the Advantages of Stealing being the perquisites of their Trade; to bring them, and such as are before mentioned, constantly to Labour, some will say, here's a Task indeed, *hic labor hoc opus est*. But when the slenderness of their Power to resist such or the like easie Method for reforming them as is herein set down (which may receive the better encouragement tending to their own and the Publick good) and the plainness of those Laws which require it, and the easiness of putting them in execution are seriously considered; 'twill soon appear that their not demeaning themselves as useful Members of the Common-wealth, rather ariseth from the neglect of those that should *regulate* them, than from any Power in themselves to avoid being *regulated* by such or the like Method as is herein mentioned, according to the Act of Parliament in that case made and provided, whereby the Church-wardens and Overseers of the Poor are positively required by raising a convenient Stock or otherwise, to Employ and set on Work all such Poor of their Parishes, married or unmarried, as have no Estates to maintain

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them, and use no ordinary and daily Trade of Life to get their Living by. So that such as have no Estates sufficient to maintain them, and such as have no Trade in which they are ordinarily and daily Employed, are by the *plain* words of the Law to be *employed* and *set on work* by the Church-wardens and Overseers of the Poor, who are to meet once in every Month at the least, to consider of fit ways for setting and keeping such Poor on Work, upon pain of forfeiting 20 *s.* a piece for each month they neglect so to do. And such Poor as shall refuse to Work according to such appointment, are by the same Law to be sent to the House of Correction.

But the Law that says they shall set their Poor on work, cannot be understood otherwise, than that such Officers shall set them on work, in such Employments, in such manner, and by such ways and means as may best suit with the Capacities of Persons employing, and to be employed; and the occasions and circumstances of time and place, conceive, that the setting down a method is no adding unto, or a digressing from the Law, but rather a submissive compliance therewith. But before I mention such Method as I presume to propose, shall in pursuance of what I before said, *viz.* that 40 *l. per Annum*, or rather a far greater sum hath, and still may by such method be gotten in *W.* and proportionably be of Advantage to this County beyond 9000 *l. per Annum*, if the same or like means were used. For Instance,

G. B.

G.B. a common Begger in adjacent and remote Parishes, complaining of extraordinary swellings in one of his Legs (which with Plaisters, Binders, *&c.* seemed near as great as his waste) pretending to have a sick Wife and young Children (all false) made Begging his ordinary and daily Trade; and having for near Twenty Years so complained, was generally believed therein: But the method herein to be proposed *for bringing idle and counterfeit Beggers, and other idle Persons to work*, brought him in a few days time to throw off his burthen of Clouts from his feigned griefs, and to follow his work day by day; so that by his Threshall, Mattock, and the like, he now gains his Meat and Drink, and 5 *d. per* Day; and in likelihood hath forgotten which was the lame Leg. 5 *d. per* Day is 2 *s.* 6 *d. per* Week, in one Year, abating two Weeks for Holy-days, comes to ... 6 *l.* — 5 *s.* — 0 *d.*

His Diet being part of his Wages, cannot be less than 5 *d.* a Day more, and in the like time comes to ... 6 *l.* 5 *s.* 0 *d.*

His Wife a lusty Woman, and formerly a common Vagabond, can well by her labour earn her Diet, which may be valued at 18 *d.* a week, and 6 *d.* a week Wages, and will seem to work at that rate; yet so, comes to *per Annum* ... 5 *l.* — 0 *s.* — 0 *d.*

I. S. another common Begger, would sometimes be on his Range without once returning home in a quarter of a Year, and at last return as lousie, pennyless, and ragged as he went out; now constantly keeps his *Church*, having formerly no Cloaths to come *there*, earns his Meat and

Drink, which cannot be valued leſs than 2 *s.* 6 *d.* in a Week, conſequently in a Year, abating as before, comes to ——— 6 *l.* — 5 *s.* — 0 *d.*

He likewiſe receives 2 *s. per* week Wages in the Summer, and 1 *s.* 6 *d. per* week Wages in the Winter, and hath his conſtant work at one place, which Yearly comes to ——— 4 *l.* — 7 *s.* — 6 *d.*

His Wife, a luſty Woman, and formerly a common Vagabond, can well earn her Diet, and 6 *d. per* week, and I conceive would ſcarce accept of 12 *d. per* week and Diet, if offered; yet at 6 *d. per* week and Diet comes yearly to as before ——— 5 *l.* — 0 *s.* — 0 *d.*

W. P. a ſtrong Perſon, but of weak Capacity, having a luſty Woman, and a common Vagrant to his Wife, who could by her begging Trade gain his and her own Diet, and the Pariſh provided him Cloaths; yet in a ſhort time after, he had Neceſſaries in order, could well earn his Diet, and 2 *s. per* week Wages; his Diet *per Annum* valued at ——— 6 *l.* — 5 *s.* — 0 *d.*

And his Wages at 2 *s. per* week, comes to *per Annum* ——— 5 *l.* — 0 *s.* — 0 *d.*

His Wife can well earn as each of the other two *per Annum*, as before ——— 5 *l.* — 0 *s.* — 0 *d.*

I have hinted at only but a ſmall part of this one ſort of Idlers that the Pariſh of *W.* could lately afford, there being many others, ſome that can get Wages beyond their Diet; others that can earn their Diet, which ſingly in a years time is conſiderable; ſome continue reformed, and

and *all* would with a little care; and I cannot believe but that any that can walk ſome miles to beg, can earn their Bread at home, but forbear particularizing them, the labour of thoſe already mentioned, and who formerly ſpent their time idly, or unprofitably as to the *Publick*; amounting yearly to more than I before pretended to demonſtrate: And know not where there are two Pariſhes together, in one of which may not be found of idle and looſe Perſons a number anſwerable to 6 in *W.* or rather more.

And now having by an uſual and demonſtrative way ſet down the experienced effects of our Method, ſhall next mention the cauſe or manner thereof.

Firſt, *How to find and provide* Employments *for all ſorts.*

Secondly, ~~*How to compel both Men and Women conſtantly to follow their* Employments, *who receive Relief of the Pariſh, and can* wander *abroad; for ſuch can* labour *at home.*~~

Thirdly, *How to compel the Poor of each Sex, who receive no ſuch* Relief, *conſtantly to follow their* Labour.

Firſt, For providing Work for men in Husbandry, this was our Method; we gave them *Liſts* (taken out of a Book, wherein all our *Liſts* of this ſort were entred, ſubſcribed by the *Officers*, and allowed by two *Juſtices* of the Peace) in this manner.

You *A. B.* when not otherwiſe conſtantly Employed, are to work for *C. D.* four days, *E. F.* three days, *&c.* the Payers to the Poor ſucceſſively as herein named, to receive

ceive for your work your Diet, and 3 *d. per* Day in the Summer, and 2 *d. per* Day in the Winter, and to give each Perſon three days notice before you apply to them for their work, and to give us an account of your due obſervance hereof at — on *S.* ſeven night next, between the hours of ----- and to give the like account at the ſame place on every *S.* ſeven night for three months then next following, between the hours of ——

Note, *That ſuch as receive Relief from the Pariſh, were to give ſuch account as above, before they received their Pay.*

And for Employing Women, this was our Method: We agreed with one Perſon, who uſually Employed ſeveral *Spinſters*; the ſubſtance of which Agreement was, That he was to Employ in *Spinning*, *Carding*, &c. all ſuch Women as by direction of the Overſeers ſhould apply to him for Work, to pay them ſuch Wages as they ſhould deſerve; and accordingly Order them where to go for Work: And in caſe any of them ſhould detain or imbezzle any Wool to them delivered, the Owner to prove the delivery thereof before two Juſtices of the Peace; and thereupon the Overſeers to pay him the value thereof; and they in recompence thereof, to receive ſuch ſatisfaction from the imbezler as the Juſtices ſhould order. By this means both ſorts had ſufficient Employents provided for them: And ſuch as afterwards ſhould refuſe to Work, came directly within the reach of that Law, that ſuch ſhall be ſent to the *Bridewell*.

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Note, *The like may be done for Employing of Combers and Weavers, where ſuch are.*

Secondly, *How to compell ſuch as receive Relief of the Pariſh, to follow their Labour*, &c.

They having fit *Employments* provided for them in manner before mentioned as they ought, ſo they can eaſily make out that they have conſtantly and diligently been *Employed* therein, or in ſome other Lawful *Employments* (if they have been ſo *Employed*) either by procuring their *Employers*, or ſome of their Families to come at the *Pay-Board*, or elſewhere, to certifie how they have been *Employed*, and what they have done ſince laſt *Pay-Day*: Or elſe they may bring a *Certificate* thereof in Writing from thoſe who *Employ* them; and until they give a good account of their diligence, and in ſuch manner atteſt the ſame, to receive no *Relief*.

Thirdly, *How to compel ſuch Poor as receive no Relief from the Pariſh, to follow their Labour.*

Both Men and Women had Employments provided for them in manner before mentioned: But their Neceſſities not bringing them to the Pay-board, uſed theſe ſeveral ways.

Firſt, Knowing that thoſe who received Relief, would account it no ſmall Puniſhment to be at once deprived of their pleaſant old Trade of *walking* and *begging*, and be compelled daily to *Labour*. And likewiſe in manner aforeſaid to prove the ſame, would be apt to envy their old Companions and other *Idlers*. And therefore to make them

them the forwarder in complaining, promiſed them a Reward of 1 *s.* for each Perſon they ſhould diſcover and complain of for *Begging*; and the like Reward for diſcovering and complaining of any of the luſtier or ſtronger ſort of *Poor* that ſhould ſpend any working day idly, or in looſe diſorderly Employments (tho they did not beg) and the like Reward to any other complainer: By this means they had ſtore of *Overſeers* or Spies, and were afraid one of another.

And tho this (like ſetting one Thief to catch another) may be a good way, yet leſt the Knaves ſhould agree, it is a ſure way for the Overſeers, or one of them, or rather ſome Perſon to be continually employed for that purpoſe once in a week or fortnight, till there be a full Reformation, to call all ſuch to an account, whom they ſhall any way ſuſpect to have neglected their work, whether they have wrought according to the Order they lately received; if not, that they make out by good circumſtances how elſe they have been Employed, and what they have done ſince laſt examined: And in caſe they cannot, or will not give a good account (to wit) that they have done ſo much work in that time, as Perſons of their ſtrength and capacity might conveniently do; then their not giving ſuch account is a juſt inducement to ſuſpect they have been *idle* or *ill* Employed: And therefore 'twill be both proper and eaſie to have them before two Juſtices of the Peace: And in caſe they do then prove they have conſtantly followed their Lawful Employments, yet for their refuſing

refuſing to give an account at home, their Journey will be a juſt Puniſhment. But if they cannot then prove that they have conſtantly followed their Lawful Employments, it will be a juſt cauſe for the Juſtices to ſend them to the *Bridewell*, as the foreſaid * Statute in this caſe directs.

* 43. *Eliz. cap.* 2.

And now having, as I conceive, briefly mentioned a plain Method, I ſhall withall obſerve thoſe Objections that have been by *ſome*, and may again be made by *others*.

Firſt, That thoſe who are by Liſts to work round a Pariſh, live at ſo great diſtance from ſome places, that they cannot return home at Night, and are, for the moſt part, unfit to be Lodged.

This Exception may be thus ſalved: They may have a Bed, *viz.* a Sheet or Blanket provided for them by the Overſeers, the charge thereof deducted out of their own Wages, which they may carry with them as often as they change Houſes (as ſoon as they have been at ſuch places in order according to their Liſts, whence they may return home at Night) which will not only be a Lodging fit for ſuch Perſons, who may well be ſuppoſed not to be of the better ſort of Workmen, but equal with the *Scotchmen*, the moſt genteel ſort of Runabouts.

Yet this is an Objection that will ſeldom or never need this or any other like remedy; for ſuch looſe Perſons once finding that they muſt conſtantly follow ſome Lawful Employment either *out* of, or *in Bridewell*, will get themſelves into conſtant Work, or take Tasks, yea, and work at half Price, rather than ſo wander from place to place, and

as 'twere, beg Work, which the worſt Workmen ſcorn to do, eſpecially of ſuch who deſire their room rather than their company.

The next Objection is the *Obſtinacy* of thoſe that ſhould Employ them according to their Liſts; ſome pretending they have no Employments other than for thoſe whom by compact they are to employ, and ſo will not employ ſuch as ſhall be ſent unto them by the Overſeers.

This Objection ſeldom or never needs an anſwer, for the reſolution that may be expected from thoſe that are ſo appointed to work, *not* to work according to ſuch appointment as hath been obſerved, will prevent the grounds of ſuch clamour: Yet if any ſhall apply to ſuch, who either cannot, or will not Employ them; for inſtance, ſhould one that hath 20 *l. per Annum*, be appointed to Employ one of the Poor two days, and for his work to give him Diet, and 2 *d.* or 3 *d. per* day. If ſuch Maſter will pay the Wages, which for two days may be 4 *d.* or 6 *d.* that ſhould excuſe him for his turn, and the Workman go to the next on his Liſts, and the money ſo to be paid, not to be paid to the Workmen, for if it ſhould, they will get half a dozen Maſters in a day to put them off, but paid to the Overſeers, and accounted for by them, as for and with the rates to the Poor. And if any refuſe to pay ſuch ſmall ſum, which will not coſt the owner of 20 *l. per Annum* 1 *s.* in a Year, conſidering that few or none will go round according to ſuch Liſts, I conceive ſo much may be added to their *rates* to the *Poor* beyond their uſual proportion; or charged on them by a rate made for the purpoſe, to be entituled, *A rate made*

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by the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor, for setting on Work, and better Relief of the Poor, &c. And all to be charged as by other rates, and those to be excused from Payment that Employ them according to the Lists.

A Third Exception is, *The trouble or difficulty in the oversight or managery hereof.*

But in one Year this Method will prevent abundance of trouble; for loose, idle Persons being always at leisure, do often clamour for Relief when they need none: And if their demands be not satisfied, they complain to the Justices, who never do, nor can do less than order the Officers to come before them, to answer, and shew cause, if any, for not providing for them according to their need, or else to relieve them according to their necessity without appearing. And such Officers as live far from the place where the Justices meet, will often give the Complainers far more than they need, meerly to save themselves such a Journey, especially when they have the wit to complain in a busie time. Whereas few or none will be willing to accept of Relief from the Parish upon such terms, as once in a week or fortnight publickly to give an account of their demeanor unto him to whom they will soon give the Title of *Bridewell-keeper*. And many will maintain a decrepid Husband, Wife, or Child, rather than come under such weekly Examination, whose maintenance otherwise would not only lie on the Parish, but make all the rest of such a Family idle.

For men in Husbandry, it will be a very small trouble to procure them Employments; 'tis only writing and

delivering them *Liſts*, where and at what rates to work: And the Wages ſhould be the leſs, for that the Maſters may be the willinger to Employ them, and that they may the rather get work themſelves.

And for Employing Women in Spinning, Carding, *&c.* that trouble will be leſs to the Overſeers than writing and delivering Notes, for Men in Husbandry; for one Perſon that uſually Employs Spinſters, may Employ them all without 1 *d.* damage, there being enough of ſuch in or near moſt Pariſhes in *Devon*, and ſcarce a Pariſh wherein ſome Weaver, Comber, or other doth not Employ a good part of the Spinſters therein. And it can be no damage to the *Employer* of them; for 'tis certain he will pay them no more Wages than they deſerve: And he is ſure in caſe they ſpoil his Goods, to be ſatisfied for the ſame by the Officers, he proving the delivery thereof. And the Officers need not fear of being at any great charge in making ſuch ſatisfaction, for the Poor that receive the Wool, will make ſatisfaction themſelves, rather than be publickly Whipt, as the * Law directs.

* 7. *Jac.* 7.

And as to the calling them to an account, that trouble ſcarce requires an hours time in a fortnight; for if they work according to the appointment of the Officers, thoſe that Employ them will ſoon give an account thereof. If elſewhere, they muſt ſatisfie the Officers thereof, or ſuch as they ſhall appoint to examine them at ſome time and place, once in a week or fortnight to be limited unto them: And in caſe of neglect, or refuſal, to be puniſhed as is before mentioned in the clauſe *for ſetting ſuch Poor*

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on Work as receive no Relief. And there is ſcarce a great Pariſh wherein there is not a Perſon or two, who for 40 or 50 *s. per Annum* will undertake the ſetting up, and continual managery thereof, which will be more than ſo many pounds gains to the Pariſh: And in *ſmall* Pariſhes it will be little or no trouble, and in a ſhort time little or none in a *great* one.

Another Scruple hath been made by Overſeers of the Poor, and ſome others, that whileſt the Statute by which they are conſtituted, only requires them to ſet their Poor on Work, whether ſuch as *never* received *Relief* for themſelves or Families from the Pariſh, or are not otherwiſe apparently *Poor*, may *be compelled* conſtantly to follow ſome Lawful Trade or Employment. And becauſe the ſatisfying of ſuch Officers of their *Power* and *Duty* herein, is of vaſt conſequence, the labour of ſuch People, when they come to be placed in Alms-houſes being ſmall, comparatively to what it might have been when they followed the Ale-houſes, &c. I ſhall tranſcribe the reſolution of the *Oracle* of the *Engliſh* Laws on another Statute, whoſe words are *theſe*.

By the Stat. of the 7. of K. *James*, tho they have Lawful means to live by; yet if they be idle or diſorderly Perſons, the Juſtices of the Peace have power to commit them to the Houſe of Correction: A general and large Power given unto them, without exception of any Perſon. And ſaith further, that their *Mittimus* may be more ſafe upon this Statute, *Quia otioſa & inordinata perſona*; for that he is an idle and diſorderly Perſon, Or, that he is an idle Perſon, Or, that he is a diſorderly Perſon; according to

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the words of this Act, than on the 39. *Eliz.* with this Marginal Note here inſerted.

The words are in the disjunctive.

Beſides, this new Method of Catechiſing will ſoon get the name of a new *Bridewell*; and to be ſo Examined, will be lookt on to be ſuch a diſgraceful thing, that the beginning with two or three in a Town or Pariſh will affright the reſt into an orderly manner of living.

Another Exception is the obſtinacy and neglect of Officers that ſhould Employ them, who will not take this or any other Method for ſetting their Poor on work, tho the Law, and the Magiſtrates Order thereupon, poſitively require it.

The contempt, obſtinacy, and neglect of Inferior Officers are in this Age as 'twere Treaſon-proof againſt all Authority, Publick Intereſt, common Reaſon and Civility, the *Mare Lethi* of all Laws; ſuch ſwallow Oaths without the leaſt ſtraining, ſeldom preſent the moſt apparent Offences without being ſet on by ſome perſonal Prejudice or Quarrel of their own; hence Faction and Profaneneſs have their ſhelter. Yet tho they look on their Oaths as things of form and inſignificant, their own perſonal Intereſt is ſtill minded. So as that thoſe who will not preſent an Offence for their Oaths ſake, nor for ſecuring the Publick Peace, nor for ſuppreſſing Profaneneſs, will do it to ſave themſelves a ſhilling. And now having obſerved where they are leaſt Fortified, next follows how to make an attempt there.

If the Juſtices of the Peace, who are emphatically, or more eminently the Overſeers of the Poor of the County,

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(all others being their Substitutes, and acting by their Nomination and Order) shall be fully convinced of the great Advantages of reforming the loose, idle, and lewder sort, and more orderly bringing up the Children of such. If they consider what the charges of maintaining them may otherwise in a short time come to, and what other ill consequences may be expected from their numbers and *Levelling* Principles, of which they gave some hint by their Mutineers in the *late Frost*. As they would be *willing*, so they would find it an *easie* matter to cause a general Reformation of such. And although I cannot propose as fit expedients as themselves may know, yet presume to propose one, which doubtless will soon make the Officers diligent therein, and consequently effect *all* the rest.

Informers being never wanting against any sort of Offenders whom the Justices of Peace, or others of Worth and Quality desire to punish; whensoever any that is herein countenanced by them shall see a Person begging, or wandring, or otherwise idly behaving himself, let him procure such Person to be warn'd to appear before the two next Justices to answer for such his loose, idle, or disorderly manner of living; and also in like manner procure the Church-wardens and Overseers of the Poor of the Parish where such idle Person dwells, to appear before the same Justices at the same time to answer for not *providing Work* for, and *setting on Work* such poor Person, as the *Law* directs. And upon hearing the matter, if it shall appear that such Officers have fully discharged their Duty, in providing Work and fit Employments for such poor Person, then

the Perſon ſo wandring by the poſitive words of Law to *be ſent to the Bridewell* for his or her not duly owing the ſame. But if ſuch Officers cannot prove that they have provided Work, &c. for ſuch poor Perſon, then they are by the ſame Eliz. cap. 2. Law to pay 20 s. apiece for each Month have ſo neglected: And the Puniſhment of *one* Offi- will make an *hundred* others diligent to do their Duty. And that Informers may never be wanting, the Anci- Method of *Marſhals* (which yet in ſome meaſure re- ns) may be renewed, their numbers increaſed, their ay not Yearly, as now, but proportioned to their gence and numbers of Vagrants they Apprehend, &c. Having been already tedious, I ſhall only add, that will be ſo far from over-ſtocking the County *Bride-* that will ſoon eradicate the very Roots of *Idleneſs*, which ſo many are now brought up and prepared for

Cum tot idem quos nos habeant animaſque manuſque.
Dic Cur. vitam alio nequeant traducere pacto?

FINIS.